Sources of Lead in the home

Lead-based paint
Lead found in paint from homes built before 1978 is the most common source of lead exposure. Maintain a clean home by cleaning window sills with a wet cloth and wet mop floors.

Commercial products
Some commercial products may contain lead including children’s toys, jewelry, pewter, and fishing tackle. Be sure to check the U.S. Recall List and remove any objects that may not be lead free from the reach of children.

Traditional folk medicine
Some traditional folk medicine may contain lead. The only way to know if folk medicine contains lead is by lab testing. Avoid using folk medicine on children. Discuss use of folk medicine with doctor.

Soil and water contamination
Lead can be found in soil around the home from chipping paint. Lead may be found in water from pipes and faucets in the home. To reduce exposure, do not let children play in soil near the home. If you suspect lead is in your tap water, drink and cook with bottled water while repairs are being completed.

Cigarette smoke
Cigarette smoke can increase blood lead levels in children that are exposed to cigarette smoke in the home. Avoid smoking around children in the home and vehicle.

Take-home work exposure
Children can be exposed to lead when it is brought home by a family member from work on their skin, clothes or shoes. Be sure to shower, change clothes and shoes at work, and maintain a clean vehicle to reduce what is brought home to a child.